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AN EXAMINATION AND INVESTIGATION OF SELECTION CRITERIA FOR COUNSELING TRAINEES

A Thesis

Presented to the

Department of Counseling

and the

Faculty of the Graduate College

University Of Nebraska

In Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree

Master of Arts

University of Nebraska at Omaha

by

Carol L. Frost

July, 1994

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THESIS ACCEPTANCE

Accepted for the faculty of the Graduate College, University of Nebraska, in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts, University of Nebraska at Omaha

Thesis Committee

Name	Department/School
Leo H Harrington	Counseling
Joe Lewis	Counseling
Deana F Liddle	Psychology

Chairperson Leo H Harrington

Date July 22, 1994

Abstract

This study investigated the extent to which various academic measures (MAT/GRE-v, undergraduate GPA, and ethnicity) and non-academic measures (MMPI-2 T scores, references, interview, and work experience) predict interpersonal characteristics and skills and intrapersonal functioning (counseling potential) in a graduate counseling program. Admission screening scores for 146 enrolled students were used to predict counseling potential measured by a thirteen item unifactor criterion developed from interviews with eleven expert faculty members.

Multiple regression analyses demonstrated that the best predictors were ethnicity, MMPI-2 paranoia scale, references, and interview. Discriminant analyses failed to identify "problem students". The discussion focuses on the need for non-academic aspects in criterion development in counseling programs and design requirements for future selection studies.

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Chapter I

Introduction

What do we look for during the screening and selection process of potential students into a graduate counseling program? How are the desired traits and characteristics translated into counseling abilities? What are the important traits and characteristics of good counselors? How are they measured? How do we define "good counseling"? These are some of the more pressing issues that stand out in today's graduate student selection literature. This study adds to the body of literature by addressing non-academic screening and selection procedures regarding intrapersonal functioning and interpersonal skills or counseling potential.

Faculty in clinically oriented graduate counseling programs are charged with evaluating students' academic proficiencies, clinical proficiencies, and self understanding to "screen from the program those individuals who are unable to provide competent service" (American Counseling Association [ACA] 1983). Historically, admission criteria for students to a graduate counseling program have been based on objective and subjective indicators. Traditionally, the objective indicators include such instruments as the Miller's Analogy Test (MAT)(1992), Graduate Record Examination (GRE)(1992), and undergraduate grade point average (UGPA). These indicators are presumed to predict future success based on past successes (Daehnert & Carter,

1989). Researchers over the past two decades, however, have noted that these objective indicators have proven to be inadequate predictors of counseling effectiveness (Jones, 1974; Hosford, Johnson, & Atkinson, 1984; Markert & Monke, 1990). Subjective indicators include letters of reference and interviews (e.g.: group and/or individual). Personality indicators such as the Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory - 2 (MMPI-2) (1989) are also used. Certain subscores of the MMPI-2 may have some general outcome predictability regarding clinical or non-academic skills (Daehnert & Carter, 1989).

There is wide-spread agreement that prospective students must be screened for objective academic competence. Most graduate counseling program faculty use some variation of the selection criteria listed above to do so (e.g.: Daehnert & Carter, 1988; Markert & Monke, 1990). Dienst and Armstrong (1988),however, note that performance in clinical proficiency is unrelated or independent of academic performance. Hence, most counseling educators would agree with the necessity of evaluating interpersonal skills and intrapersonal functioning during the screening and selection process as well as academic competence. The task of making operational and measuring non-academic and clinical competence, however, is complex and not well defined (Deutsch, 1985; Ridgway & Sharpley, 1990; Olkin & Gaughen, 1991; D'Andrea & Daniels, 1992; Woodyard & Canada, 1992).

The growing concern among counseling educators is highlighted by the need to identify through the screening process individuals who, because of interpersonal or intrapersonal deficiencies, will have difficulty functioning in a clinical setting. According to Littlepage, Bragg, and Rust (1978), the concern is compounded by the intense competition among students to get into graduate counseling programs. Most program pre-admission committee members use the additive or composite score method for selection and sum both academic and non-academic criteria. With increased competition, cut-off scores become higher. Littlepage, et al. noted that it has not been demonstrated that those who make the cut and are selected make the best counselors. Arguments can be made for and against the need for predicting academic abilities. The literature clearly identifies the general use of academic screening procedures, but also contends, as stated above, that those who are successful academically do not necessarily make "good counselors". Individuals should be able to perform adequately in classrooms in order to demonstrate understanding of underlying counseling theories, etc. It may be perhaps more important, however, to demonstrate characteristics and traits of counseling potential outlined in the study to be presented. Accordingly, Sexton and Whiston (1991) identified the need for sound methodological studies that examine students' interpersonal characteristics and their relationship to effective client interactions in a clinical setting.

In recent years, researchers have looked at the problems surrounding counselor-trainee screening and selection procedures. They note a distinct lack of the development of adequate, specific, systematic criteria (e.g.: Olkin & Gaughen, 1991; D'Andrea & Daniels 1992; Woodyard & Canada, 1992). Some research has begun to address evaluation of non-academic competencies or counseling effectiveness (e.g.: Hosford et al., 1984; Daehnert & Carter, 1987).

The intent of this study, accordingly, is to examine the existing selection procedures used by a large Midwestern university to determine if the desired personal traits of program applicants can be predicted. The prediction procedures will be compared to a criterion based on expert faculty ratings of students currently in the same program.

Purpose and Significance of the Study

The purpose of this study was to determine if any of the existing student screening pre-admission procedures can predict personal traits which will identify effective interpersonal skills and interactional functioning (i.e. counseling potential). Scores for all students who were admitted into the graduate counseling program using the current selection criteria were used. Existing selection criteria was compared to thirteen rating scales developed by faculty experts.

Prospective students, as well as educators, will benefit from a more discriminating selection process. Students who will have difficulty performing in a clinical setting will not have to waste time, energy, and money on a program where they will be ineffective. Educators will not be faced with the dilemma of confronting these same students.

The question to be evaluated is: Can the existing selection process provide predictive information regarding personal characteristics and personal traits valued in counselors. Specifically, three research questioned are posed.

1. What is the structure of the criterion scales and of the selection criteria measures?
2. Does regression analysis show some combination of the admission criterion correlate with expert faculty ratings of appropriate personal traits?
3. Can a discriminate analysis use currently employed admission criteria to identify problem students?

Delimitations

The subjects in this study were students who were enrolled in the graduate counseling program at the University of Nebraska at Omaha and who were admitted under the present screening procedures. The present system became effective with the Fall 1990 applicants. The current

procedures incorporate: (a) the GRE - verbal or the MAT, (b) UGPA, (c) MMPI-2, (d) letters of reference, (e) work experience, (f) group interviews, (g) essays, and (h) ethnicity. Scores of students currently in the program who were admitted prior to this time when different criteria were employed were excluded. Student scores were collected for data analysis through the Fall selection process of 1993. Scores for 176 students became the basis for the study. It can be theorized that students without counseling potential will be identified early and selected out of the program or remediation sought that will improve counseling potential prior to entering a graduate counseling program.

Procedures

Admission scores for the study were collected from student files. Faculty who were on staff during the Fall of 1993 provided the thirteen rating scales. A subgroup of the same faculty identified clinically ineffective students who are currently in the program.

Definition of Key Terms

The specific terms used in this study are defined as follows:

1. Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory - 2 (MMPI-2): A standardized instrument used to measure personality traits. The test contains approximately 500 true or false statements designed to tap emotional reactions. The MMPI-2 contains thirteen scales: 10 of which

measure a trait, three are validity or control scales. The MMPI-2 was normed from extensive samples of an average population. Data on test-retest reliability and internal consistency range from .67 to .92 for a sample of 82 men, and from .58 to .91 for a sample of 111 women. According to the 1989 MMPI-2 manual, these figures are based on a seven day retest interval. Validities are established by comparing test score results to clinical observations. In addition, items for the MMPI-2 are chosen for their actuarial validity.

2. Undergraduate Grade Point Average (UGPA): A cumulative figure for each student calculated by averaging grades earned in behavioral science undergraduate classes.
3. Group Interview: An interview session conducted by two faculty members and one graduate assistant and attended by eight to ten program applicants.
4. Graduate Record Examination - verbal (GRE-v): A test to measure one's ability to reason with words in solving problems. According to Wellington (1965), the GRE-v reveals K-R 20 reliabilities of .91. Information regarding predictive validity is not available but correlations of about .75 are made to the MAT.
5. Miller's Analogy Test (MAT): A high level mental ability test requiring the solution of problems stated as analogies. According to Guilford

(1965), odd-even reliability is estimated to be between .92 to .93. Test-retest reliability ranges are found between .82 to .89 after a time lapse of 16 months. Validities collected at the University of Minnesota education courses have a median value of .55 although more diverse median criterion validity coefficients are reported to be .38. The MAT and GRE-v correlate about .75 to .80. Individual validity studies are suggested for local use.

6. Letters of reference: Letters written by individuals in the community who have had opportunity to work with and observe a program applicant and can recommend the applicant for the counseling program.
7. Experts: Faculty members who are trained in the counseling process.
8. To have "knowledge" of a student: The faculty member (or expert) self evaluates that she/he will have had sufficient classroom and\or practicum\internship experience with a given student to allow her\him to have formed a relationship sufficient enough to allow evaluation of that student's personal traits and personal characteristics that will influence their counseling potential.

Organization of this Report

The introduction, purpose and significance of the study, delimitations, procedures, and definitions of key terms are included in this chapter. A review of current related literature and research is contained in Chapter two.

The methodology or procedures used to gather data and analysis of the collected data is described in Chapter three. Chapter four contains the findings of this study. The summary, conclusions, and recommendations for further research is in Chapter five.

Chapter 2

Literature Review

There is a paucity of published material relating to personal characteristics and traits of individuals applying to a graduate counseling program. This chapter provides a review of the available literature pertinent to screening and selection procedures for non-academic, personal traits and personal characteristics.

History of the Problem

There is a shortage of published research information relating to non-academic clinical capabilities of graduate counseling trainees. Much of the related research is devoted to a discussion of a need for non-academic screening and selection procedures (e.g.: Markert & Monke, 1990; Dienst & Armstrong, 1988; Littlepage, Bragg, & Rust, 1978; Hirschberg & Itkin,1978). Hirschberg and Itkin (1978) noted the need for traditional academic predictors as well as valid non-intellectual predictors. They recommended that further explorations might include predictors such as letters of recommendation, peer ratings, and interviews as possible predictors.

Other researchers pointed out the need for investigations addressing issues relating to problem students who are already in counseling programs (e.g.: D'Andrea & Daniels, 1992; Woodyard & Canada, 1992; Olkin &

Gaughen, 1991; Wise Lowery, & Silverglade, 1998). Olkin and Gaughen (1991) employed a national survey of counseling educators to explore and describe the evaluation and dismissal procedures currently used by clinically oriented programs for master's level students. The results of the survey identified three areas that indicated a need for further work. The first is in the area of substance abuse as it relates to intrapersonal functioning. The next area identified was physical problems (e.g.: chronic illnesses of problem students). Third, the notion of interpersonal functioning was identified and further study was recommended.

Finally, some published studies explored issues relating to the debilitating effect of prolonged counselor contact with people in emotional pain (e.g.: Standler & Willing,1998; Deutsch, 1985). Standler and Willing (1988) discussed impaired counselors, defined and described impairment, and noted the ambiguity involved in the overall construct. They advised a proactive approach for the profession and recommended that individuals self-monitor stress factors regularly, examine relationships with clients, family, and friends, and get help to refresh and renew themselves.

In a literature review, Sexton and Whiston (1991) pointed out the lack of and the need for research that specifically addresses non-academic selection procedures for prospective graduate counseling program trainees.

A review of the available literature pertinent to non-academic selection procedures is presented below.

Review of the Literature

Federici and Schuerger (1974) investigated the extent to which UGPA, GRE test scores, letters of recommendation, interview ratings, and biographical information could predict faculty ratings of selected interpersonal skills. Interpersonal skills ratings were based on information contained on a personal data form (e.g.: self-expression, maturity, life experiences) and information gathered during an interview session involving three faculty members and five candidates (e.g.: self-understanding, verbal expression, control of anxiety, poise, personal warmth, ability to get along with others). These ratings were factor analyzed and two factors emerged: academic abilities and personal traits. Further analysis showed that interview ratings, biodata, and letters of recommendation supplied sufficiently different information from biodata that each were summed and became independent variables. The authors reported significant correlations between biodata and interviews and the criterion interpersonal skills (e.g.: good counselor, good co-worker, aware of the feelings of others). Information that formed the criterion came from faculty observations of the students in class, practica, and internships. Weaknesses of the study include potential halo and personality halo biased inherent in observational

ratings and a lack of behaviorally anchored definitions for constructs such as "good counselor" and "good co-worker". Any program utilizing subjective methods should standardize their rating scales as much as possible and incorporate behavioral anchors. All participants involved in data generation must be operating from the same set of methods, scales, and anchors.

In a study designed to determine counseling potential, Jackson (1986) conducted an investigation of peer ratings involving 83 undergraduates who were enrolled in an interpersonal skills training group. The Kagan Affective Sensitivity Scale - Form E-80 (KASS-E80) was administered at the beginning of the semester. The KASS-E80 is an instrument designed to measure affective sensitivity or empathetic ability. At the end of the semester the students selected peers whom they believed would best be able to help another person deal with an emotional or interpersonal problem. The students KASS-E80 scores that were collected at the beginning of the semester were divided into three frequency groups (upper, middle, and lower) and were rated to peer choices collected at the end of the semester (frequently chosen, chosen, and under chosen). The KASS-E80 scores for the frequently chosen and the under chosen students were compared with a group having moderate frequency within the sample. Analysis of variance planned comparisons showed significantly lower scores for the under chosen group but not significantly higher for the frequently chosen group when both

were compared to the middle group. When the upper and lower groups were compared to a population of KASS-E80 examinees, the upper group significantly outscored the population but results of the lower group was not significant. Jackson reported two month test-retest reliabilities of .71, a split-half reliability of .69, and a K-R 20 reliability of .61. In addition, predictive validity was reported as mild. Jackson freely admitted that this was not an exact replication of the original Kagan study, but noted that there seemed to be some potential for the use of this instrument if it is used in conjunction with other selection and screening instruments. One might note that if the instrument is modified for an individual graduate counseling program, it may account for some as yet untapped variance relating to interpersonal characteristics. As well, users must be aware that there may be a strong halo effect due to peer popularity.

Hosford, Johnson, and Atkinson (1984) conducted a study that compared academic criteria (e.g.: GRE - verbal and quantitative, MAT, and UGPA), experiential background, and personal interviews to faculty ranked evaluations of academic success, counseling competence, and anticipated professional performance. In this study, 77 graduate counseling students were ranked at the end of their first year in the program by four core program faculty members. Criteria included academic performance, counseling competency, and anticipated professional success. Faculty

scores for each student were averaged and mean scores were compared to the criterion. Hosford, et al. found no relationship or predictive ability between any of the predictors and the criterion. One might note that the methodology employed in this study (e.g.: students were rated at the end of the first year and admission criteria changed over the time course of the study) could have been a contributing factor to the lack of statistical significance. The study suffers as well from being an incomplete selection validity study in that the entire range of the applicant pool was not included; only those already selected were studied.

A study conducted by Daehnert and Carter (1987) was designed specifically to isolate non-academic or clinical competency predictors as well as traditional academic predictors and criteria. Traditional criteria included UGPA and GRE scores. Non-academic predictors utilized included MMPI T scores, Strong Vocational Interest Blank, Rotter Introversion-Extroversion evaluations, letters of recommendation, biographical data, and admission committee recommendations. The predictors listed above were compared to within-program performance criteria collected at various levels of training within the program and include the following: oral interview, third semester faculty committee evaluations, graduate GPA, comprehensive examinations taken at the end of the program, practicum evaluations, internship evaluations, faculty ratings of student's functioning through the use of

paired comparisons, and peer ratings through the use of paired comparisons. Correlations were generated between pre-admission variables and each of the within-program performance measures. Significance was found at the .01 level between high scores for psychasthenia (MMPI-7) and low scores for defensiveness (MMPI-K) and high internship supervisory ratings. Elevated scores on paranoia were significantly related to good therapeutic relationship skills. Students with high scores on introversion also were highly rated by internship supervisors for best use of supervision. In addition, letters of recommendation with elevated endorsement strength correlated positively with good ratings in the practicum categories. Faculty and peer ratings both positively correlated with letters of recommendation. The most meaningful findings of this study demonstrated personality variables measured by the MMPI may be useful and accurate predictors of graduate school performance that occurred with the internship evaluation criterion.

Although available research is scarce, overall, these studies indicate that there may be predictors of interpersonal characteristics which lead to positive clinical performance available which can be teased out of current pre-admission criteria. Letters of recommendation, KASS-E80 (or some form of peer ratings), biodata, and MMPI T scores appear to have been useful in the few studies conducted. It is the intent of the current study to

investigate base-line data gathered at The University of Nebraska at Omaha, Omaha, Nebraska, Graduate Counseling Program.

Chapter 3

Methodology

Overview of the Program

The Graduate Counseling Program, located in the College of Education at the University of Nebraska at Omaha, Omaha, Nebraska, is certified and approved by the Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP). The Graduate Counseling Program provides training in five specialty areas of counseling: (a) agency, (b) gerontology, (c) elementary education, (d) secondary education, and (e) college student personnel. Omaha, Nebraska has a metropolitan population of 500,000 residents of diverse multicultural origins. Applicants to the counseling program generally represent the diversity of the population. Approximately 90% of the applicants currently reside within a 60 mile radius of Omaha and 9% of the applicants reside within a 200 mile radius of Omaha. The remaining 1% represents diverse geographic locations. The Graduate Counseling Program accepts new students into the program during the Spring and Fall semesters at the rate of 70 students per year. The Admissions Committee processes an average of 150 to 175 applications annually. Approximately 90% of those accepted into the program actually enroll.

Subjects

The subjects were 176 students in the Master's level graduate counseling program described above who were all admitted under the current selection procedures adopted in 1990. J. L. Davis (personal communication, June 22, 1994) identified the current selection procedures as multiple hurdle. Each hurdle score is transformed into a series of point assignments. Point scores for each student are summed to become a composite score. Composite scores are used during the final selection process. The hurdles and point assignments were defined and described by Davis and are presented below. An overview of the admission criteria can be seen in Appendix A.

The academic pre-admission hurdles include UGPA for behavioral science courses, MAT or GRE-v scores, essay, and ethnicity. A minimum of fifteen hours are required to establish the UGPA for behavioral science courses. There are 30 possible points available and the point system allotted to this hurdle from the lowest to the highest are: 2.5 to 2.74 = 0; 2.75 to 3.0 = 10; 3.01 to 3.5 = 20; 3.51 and above = 30.

The second academic hurdle is the MAT or GRE-v scores. If the applicant has taken the GRE within three years of their application to this program, the GRE-v score may be substituted for the MAT score. For these cases, the GRE-v is divided by ten to yield a two-digit number and that

figure is used in place of the MAT score. There are a possible 30 points allotted for the MAT/GRE-v hurdle and they are from lowest to highest: 34 and lower = 0; 35 to 45 = 10; 46 to 60 = 20; 61 and above = 30.

The next hurdle is an indirect academic assessment and is referred to as ethnicity. Literature over the past 50 to 75 years clearly points out the inequities inherent in the entire test development process. The constructs that are measured, the cultural background and training of test developers, the materials that are chosen for inclusion, the language used in the questions, and the validation process all may result in a stacking of the deck in favor of certain values and groups in our society. As a result of the differences stated above, minority group individuals are likely to test differently (lower) than majority individuals (e.g.: Madaus, 1992; Minnesota State Board of Teaching, 1992; Payne, 1993). As a group, individuals from minority or ethnic origin score lower on standardized tests than do individuals from non-minority ethnic origins. All students are periodically tested using instruments developed by isolated majority policy makers. The scores of test takers are categorized, grouped, averaged, and ranked. The ranking process quantitatively reduces all individuals to a system that fits institutional needs and requirements. A selection criteria which is based on this type of equity has a heavy negative impact on minorities (Madaus, 1992). In order to address this equity problem, the graduate committee,

composed of full-time faculty, allow a ten-point differential for individuals of minority or ethnic categories (Davis, personal communication, 1994).

An applicant must have a combined ethnicity score (if applicable), UGPA score, and MAT/GRE-v score of a minimum of 20 points or they are dropped from further processing.

An essay is required of all applicants and is the fourth academic requirement. The purpose of the writing requirement is to verify writing and grammar skills. The essay is scored on a pass/fail system. The essays are read by graduate assistants. If there is doubt regarding the skills of an applicant, a member of the faculty also reads the essay. If the paper, which is usually about two pages in length or 300 words, reveals a lack of ability in sentence formation, punctuation, grammar, and/or spelling, remediation may be required before the application is processed further. All of the subjects in this study received a pass on their essay hurdle. Therefore, essay information was not included in the predictor list for the present study as that information would not provide variance.

Non-academic and personality selection criteria hurdles include MMPI-2 T scores, interview scores, letters of reference scores, and work experience. There is a minimum personality cut-off of 60 points. Davis (1994) described these score assignments in detail.

Unlike other hurdles, the MMPI-2 test does not add points. If specific scales have values above certain points, the applicant looses points. The point assignment for the MMPI-2 may range from zero to a -120. Scales L, F, and K are validity factors. If scores on any of the validity factors are above 71, the individual looses ten points per scale. For personality scales 1 to 4 and 6 to 10, an individual will loose one point for every scale point above 65. No points are gained or lost for scale 5 (masculinity/femininity).

The group interview is the second personality criteria. Each group interview is attended by eight to ten applicants and is facilitated or led by two faculty members and one graduate assistant. The three individuals rate group attendees on ten criteria. An example of the criteria and score sheets can be seen in Appendix B. Each group participant is rated on ten criterion and each criteria has a point spread of 0 to 4. Scores from each rater for each individual are summed and the mean of these scores for the total of the ten scales are summed for each candidate. The ratings are made for any one applicant by any two of eleven faculty and any one of two graduate assistants during a given year. Ratings from all raters are added yielding a global rating for each candidate. Rater training is provided at least annually to reduce potential rater bias. The measure has considerable face validity (see description in Appendix B). Previous data indicate good reliabilities.

There are no current data available on reliability and validity. There is a maximum score potential of 40 points.

The third personality factor is letters of reference. Each graduate counseling program applicant must supply three letters of reference. The applicant provides the admissions committee with the names and addresses of individuals who will agree to fill out a recommendation form. A graduate assistant mails a references form to the individuals indicated by the applicant. A copy of the form can be seen in Appendix C. The form may be completed by any individual who knows the program applicant. Letters of recommendation written by professionals who have background in the mental health field or human services field are more influential than letters written by non-professional, non-mental health oriented friends and family. The applicant also is asked to indicate whether or not she/he may have access to these letters. Letters of reference that remain closed to the applicant are given more weight than those that may be viewed by the applicant. Unless an applicant specifically inquires, the information regarding quality of the reference writer and open/close disposition of the information is not provided in advance. If a candidate is not accepted into the program and makes an inquiry, the information is then provided. The admissions coordinator rates letters of reference. A maximum of 40 points is allotted to letters of reference. As stated, applicants must supply three references.

The 40 possible points are divided between each reference and the total is summed to yield a final score for the hurdle. References from mental health or human services professionals who have known the individual for over two years, can supply positive acknowledgment for questions b. through e., rates the individual as outstanding (f.), and whose letter will remain closed, will receive the full point allotment. A "promise potential" (f) rated good or above average receives 80% to 90% of the possible score. If the admissions coordinator is confronted with a less than clear reference, point assignment is decided by consensus of the graduate committee.

A final admissions criteria category is work experience. This hurdle is neither academic nor personality, but is considered by the graduate faculty to be an important element in the selection and screening process. Work experience includes actual employment and societal or volunteer involvements. A maximum of 40 points is allotted to this criterion. Up to thirty points of the 40 points may be given for work experience in human services during the past two years. The remaining possible ten points is allotted for volunteer services in which the applicant has been involved. The admissions coordinator evaluates this criteria. Individuals currently employed in and having two years or more direct mental health experience may receive the full 30 allotted points. Individuals with human services work experience may receive up to 90% of the 30 point allotment.

Individuals with work experience outside these areas may receive up to 50% of the potential point scores and the actual score assignment is decided by consensus of the graduate committee. Two points are allotted for each volunteer activity up to a maximum of ten points.

All applicants are asked to provide demographic information on a Personal Data Form. Information such as ethnicity, gender, educational background, employment history, volunteer activities, and primary area of counseling interest is included on the form. A copy of the Personal Data Form can be seen in Appendix D.

The faculty of the Graduate Counseling Program at The University of Nebraska at Omaha are guided by a profound commitment to train and send into the community individuals who will be an asset not only to the Program but to the Profession of Counseling. Screening procedures, therefore, are examined regularly and carefully. The faculty recognize the need to examine academic ability as well as placing that ability into the larger context of the identified and desired outcome (i.e.: training competent counselors who are able to interact well with clients and perform well in clinical arenas). Academic potential is 10% (to 37%) of the total composite score (20 to 70 possible hurdle points). The standard deviation for MAT/GRE is 13.14 (a measure of variability) and is the largest in the predictor list (see table 1) potentially giving the most weight to that predictor. It can be noted,

however, that an applicant can receive a score of zero on the MAT/GRE and still be retained in the applicant pool thereby minimizing the increased weight of that predictor. Variability of the other predictors are not as extreme. The MAT/GRE remain in the selection battery at this time primarily for face validity.

Adding all hurdle elements of the admission process, a grand total of 190 points is possible. All program applicant screening points are added and yield a composite score. The mean composite entry score for the sample in the present study is 138 with a range of 160 to 120. Entry into this program is a result of rank ordering of composite scores. For the purposes of this study, the original scale scores were used rather than converted to the 190 point selection system. The original scores retain greater variance, permitting a more accurate examination and comparison of the pre-admission variables with the criterion variables.

Development of the Criterion Measure

Faculty members provided the information used to develop the criterion measure. All faculty members and adjunct faculty members who were available during the Fall of 1993 were interviewed. Of a potential sixteen faculty (five full-time, eleven part-time), a total of eleven individuals were available and were asked to respond to the question: What characteristics and personal traits must a graduate counseling program applicant possess

when applying to the graduate counseling program? Faculty perceptions of necessary characteristics for program candidates were collected and a list of characteristics and personal trait descriptors was generated from them. In order to establish content validity, the list of twelve independent descriptors, with corresponding definitions, was distributed to the same faculty members, or experts, for their review for completeness. Reber (Dictionary of Psychology, 1985) definitions were used. The list was modified to include one more descriptor (internal locus of control) and a corresponding definition. A final list of thirteen descriptors and definitions became the criterion.

Instrument

The thirteen descriptors and definitions are presented below.

1. Adaptable - able to adjust to different conditions, environments, to modify affect and behaviors appropriately.
2. Empathetic - a cognitive awareness and understanding of the emotions of another person. Assuming in one's mind the role of another person.
3. Genuine - sincere. Free from pretense.
4. Insightful - Sensing intuitively the nature of something. Understanding the underlying truth.
5. Intelligent - Quick to understand a thought. High mental capacity.

6. Internal locus of control - Doesn't externalize. Takes (personal) responsibility for own emotions, thoughts, and life. Doesn't blame others.
7. Kind - a good or benevolent nature or disposition.
8. Mature - fully developed in mind. Possessing a more rounded, complete understanding.
9. Open to constructive criticism - having an accepting attitude and openness to feedback regarding one's own behavior.
10. Open to personal growth, change - not encumbered by a restrictive attitude to new experiences or ideas. A willingness to listen to alternative views. A willingness to examine one's own thoughts, feelings, and behaviors in light of alternative experiences and views.
11. Professional - able to demonstrate appropriate behaviors in specific situations. Displaying good judgment.
12. Sensitive - Cognizance of the feelings of another, particularly an awareness based on relatively minor cues.
13. Tolerant - An attitude of liberal acceptance of the behaviors, beliefs, and values of others.

Procedure

The raw scores from the selection criteria were collected for each student in the subject pool. The collection of scores began with the Fall

1990 admission process when the current battery was implemented. All student scores through the Fall 1993 admission process were included. Scores for a total of 176 student became the item pool. The 19 selection scores were the predictors and included MMPI-2 T scores (three validity scales and ten clinical scales), UGPA, MAT/GRE-v, ethnicity, letters of reference, group interview, and work experience.

The same eleven experts were asked to rate each of the 176 students on the criterion. The measure for each criterion was a Likert-type rating scale with a range of 1 to 9, where 9 represented the highest degree of the quality, 5 indicated an adequate or average amount of the quality, and 1 indicated an extremely low, negligible amount of the quality. The experts were instructed to rate the students using the measure described above.

Not all of the expert faculty members have opportunity to come into contact with all students. Therefore, the experts were instructed to rate only the students with whom they had adequate knowledge. The definition of adequate knowledge can be found elsewhere in this text. Some students were relatively new to the program and the expert raters may not have had sufficient opportunity to observe them and form an opinion. The decision was made at this time that if any student received no criterion ratings, their predictor data would be deleted from the study. A total of 146 students were rated. Predictor scores for thirty students, all of whom were in their

first semester in the program, were removed from further analysis. Subsequent analyses were done on 146 student scores. The criterion measures were the expert faculty ratings of these 146 students on thirteen criteria traits.

Data Analysis

Some faculty members only have the opportunity to observe students in a classroom setting. Other faculty members not only teach academic courses, they also have an opportunity to observe students in practicum and/or internship situations as well. The latter group of faculty experts made up a sub-group of raters and were asked to identify any student of the 146 in the study currently in the program who, in their opinion, should not have been admitted into the program. There were a total of seven faculty experts who were included in the sub-group category. This group of expert raters was asked to identify students who, in their opinion, should not have been admitted to the program or students with whom the experts have serious reservations regarding their interpersonal skills and abilities.

In order to be in the category, the student must have received one "definitely not" score or two "with reservation" scores from the seven faculty experts. A total of twelve students were included on the list: five "problem students" with at least one "definitely not" score, and seven students with at least two scores "with reservation".

Chapter Four

Results

There were 176 potential sets of student scores at the beginning of the study. After collecting all the faculty ratings and removing predictor scores of students who did not receive outcome ratings, the quantity of the data was reduced to 146 sets of scores. Table 1 presents the variable labels, composite mean, standard deviations, range, and skew of the predictor scores and the criterion measures.

Factor Analyses

Factor analyses were conducted to reduce the number of potential predictors and the number of potential criteria. The factor analyses were conducted using a varimax rotation with the usual SPSS default options (i.e. communality = 1, principal components extraction, and orthogonal rotation). The findings showed that the criterion variables all loaded on one factor accounting for 77.1 % of the criterion score variance with each of the thirteen traits loading strongly on the factor. Table 2 presents the traits and their loadings on the factor.

The outcome (criterion) predictors are based on averages across faculty and thus have more reliability than a single score. The averages, however, are based on different subsets and may not be consistent across all students. Furthermore, validity is based on consensual assessment which is

Table 1

Means and Standard Deviations (S.D.)

Predictor variables labels/names	Means	S.D.	Range	Skew
P1/Lie Scale	50.863	9.015	33-74	.355
P2/Infrequency	43.295	4.952	32-58	.615
P3/Suppressor	60.007	8.310	35-92	-.336
P4/Hypochondriacs	48.082	6.292	33-85	1.369
P5/Depression	44.404	5.821	31-64	.654
P6/Hysteria	51.884	5.705	35-69	.103
P7/Psychopathic deviance	51.863	7.177	37-71	.476
P8/M/F	48.973	8.050	30-71	-.047
P9/Paranoia	50.842	7.566	32-74	.146
P10/Psychasthenia	48.466	6.063	32-64	-.163
P11/Schizophrenia	47.932	6.148	32-67	.233
P12/Hypomania	50.048	8.130	28-90	.965
P13/Socialintroversion	39.774	6.649	26-61	.853
P14/UGPA	3.398	3.853	25-40	-.406
P15/MAT/GRE	49.438	13.143	18-93	.823
P16/References	35.363	2.996	22-40	-.629
P17/Interview	34.500	3.440	20-40	-.765
P18/Work experience	27.801	4.966	10-40	-.117
P19/Ethnicity	.048	.214	.00-1.00	4.276

Table 1 continued

Criterion variables label/names	Means	S.D.	Range	Skew
E1/Adaptable	6.728	1.534	1-9	-1.940
E2/Empathetic	7.014	1.447	1-9	-1.297
E3/Genuine	7.137	1.417	1-9	-1.501
E4/Insightful	6.794	1.483	1-9	-1.119
E5/Intelligent	6.858	1.526	.5-9	-1.281
E6/Internal locus	6.791	1.497	1-9	-1.170
E7/Kind	7.303	1.389	1-9	-1.849
E8/Mature	7.087	1.436	1-9	-1.473
E9/Open to constructive criticism	6.224	1.612	0-9	-1.415
E10/Open to personal growth, change	6.410	1.736	0-9	-1.313
E11/Professional	7.226	1.414	1-9	-1.661
E12/Sensitive	6.955	1.557	1-9	-1.292
E13/Tolerant	6.805	1.596	0-9	-1.543
Composite	89.335	16.593	13-114.5	-1.802

Table 2

Factor Analysis, Factor Loadings Criterion Variables

Analysis 1

Var	Comm	Factor	Eigval	% of Var	Cum %
E1	1.000	1	10.02319	77.1	77.1
E2	1.000	2	.56142	4.3	81.4
E3	1.000	3	.45320	3.5	84.9
E4	1.000	4	.35247	2.7	87.6
E5	1.000	5	.29747	2.3	89.9
E6	1.000	6	.24227	1.9	91.8
E7	1.000	7	.23087	1.8	93.5
E8	1.000	8	.19160	1.5	95.0
E9	1.000	9	.17834	1.4	96.4
E10	1.000	10	.14031	1.1	97.5
E11	1.000	11	.12520	1.0	98.4
E12	1.000	12	.10409	.8	99.2
E13	1.000	13	.09956	.8	100.0

Factor Loadings

Var	Var Name	Factor 1
E3	Genuine	.91176
E13	Tolerant	.90736
E6	Internal locus	.89730
E12	Sensitive	.89722
E11	Professional	.89595
E2	Empathetic	.89143
E10	Open to Personal Growth and Change	.88478
E9	Open to Constructive Criticism	.88309
E8	Mature	.88233
E1	Adaptable	.87084
E7	Kind	.86948
E4	Insightful	.83569
E5	Intelligent	.77829

not qualitative or quantitative. As a consequence, reliability and validity of the outcome is unknown and can only be taken at face value.

The predictors can be reduced to seven or eight factors depending on whether ethnicity is or is not included. Tables 3 and 4 present the factors and component loadings. The seven factor solution without ethnicity accounts for 66 % of the predicted score variance, whereas an eight factor solution that includes ethnicity accounts for 71 % of the predicted score variance. One can clearly see the similarities. An inspection of tables 3 and 4 show that three factors are extremely similar: in a seven factor solution, factors two (sociability), four (work history), and five (employment history) essentially equal factors four (sociability), three (work history), and five (employment history) respectively, in the eight factor solution.

In addition, without ethnicity, factor 1 (psychosis) includes paranoia, but with ethnicity, factor 1 (psychosis) barely excludes paranoia. In a seven factor solution, UGPA (Fac 7) stands alone, references align with the MMPI-2 K (suppressor) scale (Fac 6), and MAT/GRE-v is negatively correlated with the MMPI-2 L (lie) scale (Fac 3). In an eight factor analysis, ethnicity aligns with and is negatively correlated to MAT/GRE-v (Fac 6 - testing), UGPA aligns with paranoia (Fac 7 - UGPA), and references (Fac 8) stand alone. An inspection of the predictor data reveals that individuals of ethnic origin have

Table 3

Factor Analysis Without Ethnicity

	Fac 1	Fac 2	Fac 3	Fac 4	Fac 5	Fac 6	Fac 7
P10	.76990	-	-	-	-	-	-
P6	.67232	-	-	-	-	-	-
P4	.64041	-	-	-	-	-	-
P11	.59989	-	-	.46632	-	-	-
P9	.57515	-	-	-	-	-.38848	.49195
P5	.32076	.76803	-	-	-	-	-
P13	-	.74770	-	-	-	-	-
P12	-	-.57792	-	-	-	-	-.44180
P1	-	-	.81544	-	-	-	-
P15	-	-	-.64170	-	-	.43525	-
P7	-	-	-	.71477	-	-	-
P18	-	-	-	-.69893	-	-	-
P2	-	-	-	.52555	-.48151	-	-
P8	-	-	-	-	.72805	-	-
P17	.31966	-	-	-	.68251	-	-
P16	-	-	-	-	-	.70711	-
P3	.33679	-	.53268	-	-	.53632	-
P14	-	-	-	-	-	-	.80673

Key: Fac 1 = Psychosis, Fac 2 = Sociability, Fac 3 = Testing, Fac 4 = Work History, Fac 5 = Employment History, Fac 6 = References, Fac 7 = UGPA

Table 4

Factor Analysis With Ethnicity

	Fac 1	Fac 2	Fac 3	Fac 4	Fac 5	Fac 6	Fac 7	Fac 8
P10	.80409	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
P6	.67023	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
P4	.64041	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
P11	.57774	-	.46958	-	-	-	-	-
P3	.35048	.77970	-	-	-	-	-	-
P1	-	.71591	-	-	-	.39105	-	-
P7	-	-	.71104	-	-	-	-	-
P18	-	-	-.70669	-	-	-	-	-
P2	-	-	.51842	-	.50314	-	-	-
P12	-	-	-	-.72657	-	-	-	-
P5	.37238	-	-	.72114	-	-	-	-
P13	-	-.45950	-	.60197	-	-	-	-
P8	-	-	-	-	-.75691	-	-	-
P17	.31732	-	-	-	-.63063	-	-	-
P19	-	-	-	-	-	.81334	-	-
P15	-	-	-	-	-	-.72492	-	-
P14	-	-	-	-	-	-	.79405	-
P9	.53606	-.32736	-	-	-	-	.54291	-
P16	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	.84691

Key: Fac 1 = Psychosis, Fac 2 = Personality, Fac 3 = Work History, Fac 4 = Sociability, Fac 5 = Employment History, Fac 6 = Testing, Fac 7 = UGPA, Fac 8 = References

generally lower MAT/GRE-v scores, thus accounting for the inverse correlation. A discussion of standardized testing and ethnic origins was presented in chapter three.

Both seven and eight factor analyses present unusual structure formations. MMPI-2 psychosis predictors (fac 1) essentially remained unchanged in both analyses as did sociability, interview, and employment. The eight factor solution is more clear than is the seven factor analysis. With eight factors: (a) the psychosis subscales aligned; (b) MMPI-2 validity scales L and K aligned which may indicate defensiveness; (c) work history is negatively correlated with psychopathic deviance perhaps indicating that individuals with positive work experience are likely to be less deviant; and (d) ethnicity and testing aligned as discussed above. The alignment of UGPA and paranoia may indicate persistent academic pursuits. Without ethnicity though, (a) UGPA stands alone; (b) MMPI-2 K scale is equally split between references and testing; (c) MMPI-2 F scale is split between work history and interview; and (d) MMPI-2 L scale aligns with and is negatively correlated to testing. As stated above, the factor structures form unusual patterns and, as a result, interpretations cannot easily be made.

It is clearly statistically advantageous to maintain the factor structure on the outcome or criterion variables. The factor structure is strong and simple,

and thus, represents a meaningful way of presenting the outcome as a single trait.

Maintenance of which factor structure is not as clear on the predictor variables, nor is meaningfulness or parsimony much enhanced by doing so. Accordingly, subsequent analyses will be done with the actual predictor variables 1 - 19. Inclusion of the ethnicity variable clearly modified the data structure but eliminating ethnicity does not accurately represent the selection criteria. Another problem involved the skew in distribution of ethnicity. Ethnicity is a categorical variable, and the participation coded is only 4.5 % of the total population.

Regression Analyses

All predictors, one through nineteen were regressed on the combined outcome variable composite treated as a single factor score based on unit item weights. Both forced entry of all variables and step-wise regressions gave similar results. Table 5 presents the intercorrelation matrix on which they were all based. The forced entry represents the simultaneous use of all predictor variables and is not statistically significant (Multiple $R = 0.22$, $F = 1.39$, $p = 0.13$) when predictor 19 (ethnicity) is omitted. When ethnicity is included, the forced entry regression is significant (Multiple $R = 0.27$, $F = 2.085$, $p < 0.0048$) with three significantly - P 19 (ethnicity, $p = .0002$), P 9 (MMPI-paranoia, $p = .0085$) and, as one can see, is negatively correlated

Table 5

Intercorrelation Matrix

	P1	P2	P3	P4	P5	P6	P7	P8	P9	P10	P11	P12	P13	P14	P15	P16	P17	P18	P19	COMP
P1	1.000																			
P2	-.148	1.000																		
P3	.409	-.098	1.000																	
P4	.081	.031	.347	1.000																
P5	.003	.070	-.004	.371	1.000															
P6	.135	-.030	.253	.374	.265	1.000														
P7	-.092	.320	.193	.191	.087	.202	1.000													
P8	.016	-.277	.041	-.052	-.175	-.091	-.146	1.000												
P9	-.171	.151	-.078	.122	.129	.345	.056	-.113	1.000											
10	-.112	.098	.256	.452	.338	.319	.163	-.216	.301	1.000										
P11	-.057	.308	.246	.342	.113	.257	.355	-.180	.285	.476	1.000									
P12	-.022	.026	-.135	-.025	-.277	-.065	-.024	.043	-.128	-.049	.077	1.000								
P13	-.064	.140	-.297	.039	.435	-.009	.152	-.257	.123	.244	.159	-.188	1.000							
P14	-.009	.006	.078	.093	-.055	.002	.045	.025	.139	-.210	-.052	-.130	-.101	1.000						
P15	-.278	.056	-.046	-.097	-.101	-.127	-.032	-.138	-.054	.025	-.008	.042	-.035	.079	1.000					
P16	.067	-.139	.223	.113	.042	.088	.110	-.034	-.051	.081	.059	-.096	-.022	.134	.083	1.000				
P17	-.042	-.132	.039	.194	.014	.135	.082	.219	.135	.104	-.023	.151	-.138	.026	-.088	.034	1.000			
P18	.161	-.136	.092	.031	.041	.094	-.191	-.137	.016	.212	-.114	-.042	-.044	-.067	-.140	.109	-.024	1.000		
P19	.215	-.049	.056	.067	.041	.020	-.001	-.032	-.042	-.036	.129	.163	.108	-.098	-.311	.073	.092	.098	1.000	
COMP	-.012	-.068	.062	-.007	-.042	.007	.055	.021	-.120	-.021	-.037	.038	-.079	.048	.025	.116	.073	.039	-.142	1.000

with the composite on the intercorrelation matrix, P 16 (references, $p = .037$), and one marginally significant predictor - P 17 (interview, $p = .062$). All other predictors on both analyses were not significant ($p \geq .08$).

The step-wise solution may be a more relevant approach to predictor selection. Results similar to the forced entry were found. When ethnicity is included, the step-wise Multiple $R = 0.25$, $F = 7.917$, $p < 0.000$, with the best set of predictors being P 19 (ethnicity, $p = .0002$), P 9 (MMPI-2 paranoia, $p = .0024$), P 16 (references, $p = .0079$), and P 17 (interview, $p = .0219$). When ethnicity (P 19) is omitted, the Multiple $R = 0.16$, $F = 6.685$, $p < 0.0014$ with predictors P 9 (MMPI-2 paranoia, $p < 0.01$), P 16 (references, $p < 0.014$) and marginally significant P 17 (interview, $p < 0.055$). All other predictors in both analyses were not significant ($p \geq .08$. The entire sample was used in the regression rather than split samples for cross validation. If the subject pool sample had been split, the N's would have been reduced and more variance could have been lost.

In sum, using a variety of methods and models, the best predictor variables for the component criterion appear to be P 9 (MMPI-2 paranoia), P 16 (references), P 17 (interview), and P 19 (ethnicity). Their meaningfulness is discussed later. Table 6 presents the relevant regression coefficients for the step-wise analysis.

Table 6

Regression Coefficients - Step Wise Analysis

Variables in Equation	B	Beta	T	p
P19	-17.535008	-.165553	-3.751	.0002
P9	-.420590	-.134970	-3.046	.0024
P16	.967965	.117260	2.666	.0079
P17	.075389	.102195	2.300	.0219
(Constant)	53.684222	.102195	3.017	.0027

Note: Signif F = .7.917, p < 0.000

Discriminant Analysis

The goal of the discriminant analysis is to see if any predictor variables are helpful in achieving the more limited goal of selecting out those who should not have been admitted to the program according to faculty ratings.

Discriminant analyses using eighteen or nineteen predictors were performed on the two groups of students, rated either "not admitted" or "with reservation" (N = 12), and rated acceptable (N = 134). A discriminant analysis was done with eighteen and with nineteen predictor variables. Each found one discriminant function and for neither one was Wilke's Lambda statistically significant ($p \geq 0.19$). These findings are not surprising when one notes the high numbers of those rated acceptable. Predictions of 100% would be 92% correct (i.e. the base rate) over the data set with 100% accurate prediction for the 134 acceptable and 100% inaccurate prediction for the twelve unacceptable students. Table 7 presents the classification results which illustrates the effect of the base rate. There would be 93.15% of the cases correctly classified using the discriminant function but 91.78% correct simply by predicting all cases to be acceptable.

Table 7

Discriminant Function Classifaction Results With Ethnicity

Actual Group	No. of Cases	Predicted Group Membership	
		1	2
Group 1 Control Group	12	3 25.0%	9 75.0%
Group 2 Everyone Else	134	1 0.7%	133 99.3%

Note: Percent of "Grouped" cases correctly classified: 93.15%

Chapter 5

Discussion

Factor Analysis

It is clearly statistically advantageous to use the factor analyzed composite score to describe outcome or criterion measures. There appears to be a singular vision in this area. The predictor variables, however, are complex and form unusual personality clusters that are difficult to interpret without further study and add little data reduction advantage as pointed out above.

Regression Analyses

From the results of this study, ethnicity, interview, references, and paranoia appear to be useful predictors of the composite criterion. The Multiple R, although weak, is significant and accounted for 2 to 7% of the variance depending on the regression model. This suggests that selecting with the existing predictors for the composite is not strong. At this time it is difficult to know if changes should be made in the predictors or in the criterion composite, or if the restricted score ranges are due either to prior selection or to criterion rater bias accounting for the weak results.

Discriminant Analysis

The discriminant analysis suffered from the same problems as did the regression analysis as well as an extreme base rate problem. The current criterion may not be a valid indicator of interpersonal traits and characteristics or the selection process may be weak. On the other hand, the outcome variables may be an accurate measure of counseling potential and the selection process may not be predicting well. A third possibility may be a reverse of the second possibility. Finally, it may be that the selection variables may be appropriate and the criterion composite, although singular, adequate, and the weak results may be an artifact of severe range restriction across the subject pool.

From the analysis, it appears that there is little gain in prediction from the discriminant function. As stated above, the lack of variance, however, may simply be a result of restricted range of the subject pool. As described in the methods section, student applicants were dropped from further consideration for selection if academic scores fell below 20 sub-score converted points and personality scores fell below 60 sub-score converted points. If a wider range of student applicants had been accepted into the program and therefore incorporated into the study, results may have yielded greater predictable variance. In addition, many potential students may be self-selecting out as a result of the multiple hurdle screening process.

General Discussion

The present study is a post-hoc examination of a selection battery currently in use. The study was designed to investigate if any part of the selection battery predicts counseling potential and clinical success in a graduate counseling program. Results of the multiple regression, factor analysis, and discriminant analysis appear to yield little if any useful results. The step-wise multiple regression proved to supply the only significant results which accounted for only two to 7% of the variance and included ethnicity, paranoia, interview, and references. Ethnicity is a questionable predictor, however, because only 4.5% of the subject pool fell into the category. Of the currently used screening procedures, interview, references, and paranoia appear to supply information regarding counseling potential.

The desire is to improve the prediction of success. The program appears to predict successfully using the current protocol (i.e.: faculty ratings of counseling potential and identification of "problem students"). There is a strong negative skew to the composite which may indicate success of the subject pool. In addition, only 8% of the subject pool were identified as "problem". Therefore, "problems" are a rare event and, as such, very difficult to predict. One possible method of dealing with rare occurrences has been suggested by Olkin and Gaughen (1991). These authors pointed out that the graduate counseling faculty could develop a

proactive approach. For example, the counseling program requirements supplied to students as they enter the discipline might state explicitly that reviews will be given periodically. Problem identification can be dealt with at these times and courses of action can be suggested for individual students (e.g.: some form of remediation).

Technical Problems

Technical problems with the study reduce the probability of finding useful predictors. Problems include design, range measures, halo biases, inadequate instructions, and reliability and validity. First, the design problem of the investigation results from not being a complete selection study. A complete study would include a random sample of all individuals who apply to the program. Next, a full range of applicants were not represented in the subject pool, thus yielding range restriction. After selecting by multiple hurdle and ranking, less than half of the applicants are represented. Range measure problems can be seen in the strong skew of the composite and may limit available variance. In addition, the ethnicity predictor may also limit the range.

The current criterion as presented in this study suggests possible halo biases. It is potentially possible that some individuals received high ratings on all criterion measures as a result of demonstrating skill in selected areas. Fourth, the lack of specific developmental identification could produce

confusion in evaluations. Even though a Likert-type scaling of 1-9 was employed and anchors were provided at the 1, 5, and 9 levels, instructions were not made clear regarding what level of rating could be expected at various points in the program. As well, anchors were qualitative, not quantitative and behaviorally anchored.

Reliability and validity is the last technical problem. It may be that the inconsistencies of method (i.e.: who the interview raters are) across some measures reduce their utility. Questions regarding reliability of ratings need to be addressed. It might also be useful to work on criterion validity. To address this issue, it might be useful to develop measures such as early and late practicum/internship performance rated by site supervisors. In addition, within-program faculty ratings might be developed for use at critical points (e.g.: following specific applied course work). Behaviorally anchored rating scales could improve meaningfullness of the results.

Nonetheless, the study found four predictors that may be potentially useful, as stated above. Three of the predictors appear to have face validity that relates to personal traits and counseling potential (paranoia, references, and interview). The presenting issue now is to examine what they mean and how to develop them. More explicit criterion development may be an appropriate place to start.

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Appendix A

Admissions Criteria

Admissions Criteria

Academic

GPA (0-30 pts)

2.50-2.75 = 0

2.75-3.00 = 10

3.01-3.50 = 20

3.51 > = 30

MAT/GRE-v (0-30 pts)

34 < = 0

35-45 = 10

46-60 = 20

61 > = 30

Ethnicity (0-10 pts)

Yes = 10 No = 0

Essay (Pass/Fail)

Minimum Academic

Cut Off = (20 pts)

Work Experience (0-40 pts)

Personality

MMPI-2 (0-120+ pts)

L, F & K Scales

71 > = 10 pt loss

per scale

Scales 1-4 and 6-0

5 = male/female N.S.

Scores > 65 - 1/per

pt above 65

Interview (0-40 pts)

References (0-40 pts)

Minimum Personality Cut

Cut Off = (60 pts)

Appendix B

Interview Rating Criteria

Interview Rating Criteria

Instructions:

The chairman of the committee will introduce the purpose of the interview as an opportunity to observe (applicants) acting, reacting and interacting with each other. This is to be relatively brief and unsophisticated, but done each time.

Immediately following the interview, each interviewer rates each applicant on the following ten criteria using a rating scale of 0 to 4, with 4 being high.

These ratings are given to the chairman. He tallies the ratings, computes a mean and completes the Overall Interview Report Form. The sheets are then given to Scott Harrington.

1. Students shows ability to handle ambiguous situation constructively (lacks defensiveness, no withdrawal, attempts to provide structure, etc.)
2. Student's overall interview behavior lacks defensiveness.
3. Student's verbal expression is consistent with his emotional experience (congruence).
4. Student engages in self-disclosure in a health, constructive way.
5. Student's involvement in with here-and-now instead of past or future reality; student uses "I" instead of "you" or "One," thereby owning his/her own feelings.

6. Student shows genuine enthusiasm in group interaction.
7. Student is attentive and responsive to each member's interaction; responds to more than surface expressions of others in group.
8. Student exhibits clear, effective self-expression in verbal exchanges.
9. Student's verbal content lacks rigid, authoritarian, judgmental attitudes.
10. Student assumes responsibility for his actions and acknowledges other's responsibility for their actions.

Interviewer's Name_____ Interviewer Rating Sheet
Date of Interview_____

Applicant's Name _____ Criteria Pts Assigned (0-4) 1 _____ 2 _____ 3 _____ 4 _____ 5 _____ 6 _____ 7 _____ 8 _____ 9 _____ 10 _____	Applicant's Name _____ Criteria Pts Assigned (0-4) 1 _____ 2 _____ 3 _____ 4 _____ 5 _____ 6 _____ 7 _____ 8 _____ 9 _____ 10 _____
Applicant's Name _____ Criteria Pts Assigned (0-4) 1 _____ 2 _____ 3 _____ 4 _____ 5 _____ 6 _____ 7 _____ 8 _____ 9 _____ 10 _____	Applicant's Name _____ Criteria Pts Assigned (0-4) 1 _____ 2 _____ 3 _____ 4 _____ 5 _____ 6 _____ 7 _____ 8 _____ 9 _____ 10 _____
Applicant's Name _____ Criteria Pts Assigned (0-4) 1 _____ 2 _____ 3 _____ 4 _____ 5 _____ 6 _____ 7 _____ 8 _____ 9 _____ 10 _____	Applicant's Name _____ Criteria Pts Assigned (0-4) 1 _____ 2 _____ 3 _____ 4 _____ 5 _____ 6 _____ 7 _____ 8 _____ 9 _____ 10 _____
Applicant's Name _____ Criteria Pts Assigned (0-4) 1 _____ 2 _____ 3 _____ 4 _____ 5 _____ 6 _____ 7 _____ 8 _____ 9 _____ 10 _____	Applicant's Name _____ Criteria Pts Assigned (0-4) 1 _____ 2 _____ 3 _____ 4 _____ 5 _____ 6 _____ 7 _____ 8 _____ 9 _____ 10 _____

Appendix C

Reference Form Filled Out By Applicant

and

Reference Form Filled Out By Reference Provider

UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA AT OMAHA

Counseling Department, Graduate Studies

Name of Applicant: _____

The persons you indicate below should be in positions enabling them to professionally assess your potential for counseling.

It is suggested as professional courtesy that personal contact be made by you with those persons yo list below. In addition to this courtesy, the receipt of these references, in a reasonable time frame, assures prompt response.

REFERENCES

Name: _____

Title of Position: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Name: _____

Title of Position: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Name: _____

Title of Position: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

STATEMENT OF CONFIDENTIALITY

(Please Check ONE of these two items)

Option

1._____ I agree that the statements of reference provided by the above-names persons may remain confidential and I waive all rights to the contrary.

2._____ I request that my references be kept open for my review and that the writers be so notified.

_____ _____

Applicant's Signature Date

University of Nebraska at Omaha

College of Education
Counseling Department
Omaha, Nebraska 68182-0167
(402) 554-2727

_____ has provided your name as a professional reference in her/his application for admission to the Graduate Counseling Program at the University of Nebraska at Omaha.

We are enclosing a stamped, self-addressed envelope and would appreciate your courtesy in completing this form with brief statements indicating your evaluation of the applicant's potential competency in the field this applicant has selected. Use the reverse side for more space if needed.

With respect to the confidentiality of your reference, the following statement will apply:

___ **Your statement will remain confidential and the applicant has waived all rights to see your statement.**

___ **Your statement will be kept open for the applicant's examination.**

a. How long have you know the applicant and on what basis?

b. With regard to the qualifications of the applicant to be a Counselor--does the applicant establish meaningful interpersonal relations with students, teachers, and administrators?

c. Please describe the character and personal qualifications of the applicant:

d. With regard to the willingness of the applicant to do more than is expected, is the applicant creative and willing to initiate things on her or his own?

e. If the applicant were qualified and properly certified, would you be willing to employ the applicant as a Counselor?

f. Promise as a potential Counselor for a position in the field:

Below Average	Average	Above Average	Good	Outstanding	Inadequate Opportunity to Observe
[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]

Your prompt reply will be greatly appreciated.

Dated:_____
Signed:_____

Appendix D

Personal Data Form

PERSONAL DATE FORM
Counseling Department, Graduate Studies

Name_____
Name of Spouse_____ Home Phone:_____
Address:_____ Work/Other:_____
_____
Zip

Although the questions in the personal description section are optional, this information is helpful in our data collection.

Social Security Number:_____
Date of Birth:_____ Gender:_____ Male _____ Female
Race: _____ African American
_____ American Indian
_____ Hispanic
_____ Asian/Pacific Islander
_____ Caucasian
_____ Other

PRIMARY INTERESTS IN: (Check one)

_____ Elementary Counseling
_____ Secondary Counseling
_____ Agency Counseling
_____ College Student Personnel
_____ Counseling in Gerontology

Level

_____

Do you have a teaching certificate:
Yes_____ No_____:
If yes, indicate state, and type.
_____
State

_____
Type

What type of employment do you desire upon completion of the degree?

_____
_____
_____

Estimate date of beginning classwork:_____
Estimate date of graduation:_____

Indicate one of the following:
_____ I will pursue the degree program on a full-time basis.
_____ I will pursue the degree program on a full-time basis for one semester only.
_____ I plan to pursue the complete degree program on a part-time basis.

EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND

Name of College Date Attended Major Degree

_____
_____
_____

EMPLOYMENT HISTORY: (Put current or most recent employment first. Former employer may be contacted as part of the admission screening).

Name, Location & Phone of Employers	Describe Nature of Your Duties	Date of Employment
1.		
2.		
3.		

VOLUNTEER ACTIVITIES: (Put the current or most recent activity first. Agencies may be contacted in relation to your application).

Name, Location & Phone of Agency	Nature of Volunteer Activities	Dates
1.		
2.		
3.		

OTHER INFORMATION: (Use another page for any other factors that we should know in considering your application).